

Description:

This is a Request for Information (RFI). This is not a solicitation, a request for proposals (RFP), or a request for applications (RFA) of federal assistance. Interested parties are invited to submit comments and/or technical questions to Randy Butler, (202) 366-9215, or by electronic mail at Randy.Butler@dot.gov. This Request for Information (RFI) is to invite industry participants to work with the US Department of Transportation (US DOT) in developing case studies that will promote adoption of the US DOT ITS Initiative Electronic Freight Management system. The case studies are funded by the US DOT and will be conducted with the US DOT's contractor, Battelle, and will include voluntary participation from industry partners. The case studies will be conducted over a period of not less than a month. The case studies will focus on the adopters identified through this RFI and will largely evaluate the experience of these early adopters capturing actual costs and benefits gained in pilot proof of concepts.

SUMMARY: The US DOT will conduct business case studies to promote the adoption and use of Electronic Freight Management (EFM) –compliant technology applications. The EFM initiative is a USDOT-sponsored project that applies Web technologies to improve data and message transmissions between supply chain partners. The goal is to provide a mechanism for sharing freight supply chain information in a manner that is simpler, less costly, and more efficient than traditional Electronic Data Interchange (EDI) or manual information exchange methods (e.g., fax, phone, e-mail, etc.), allows for all authorized supply chain partners to access the information, and makes it easier to customize the flow of information between partners. Rather than creating large databases

for each partner to collect and maintain shipment related information, the web services approach used with EFM allows partners to maintain only the data they “create” and then share that data with other authorized users through a common web interface. This reduces the amount of duplicate data entry and the associated data quality problems. The reduced cost and complexity associated with implementing this technology will make it easier for small- and medium-sized carriers and other transportation service providers to establish reliable interfaces with shippers and other customers. Additional information about EFM can be found at the following website:

www.electronicfreightmanagement.com

Objective:

The EFM implementation case studies are intended as a means to examine the degree to which the EFM service-oriented architecture (SOA) and applications built to comply with it can promote improved operational efficiency and transportation within intermodal supply chains. Each case study is expected to offer supply chain partners, the US DOT, and other interested parties with evidence to support decisions regarding the long-term viability and sustainability of the applications being evaluated. The ultimate goal is to promote the commercial adoption and use of self-supporting EFM-related systems and services to meet the expected benefits.

In response to this RFI, potential participants are asked to submit a proposed case study plan that will include the following components.

1. Supply chain owner name, type of organization, and location

2. Identification of the organizations that would be included in the case study (i.e. carriers, forwarders, brokers, etc.).

3. Environment and Overview Background

- a. Identification of the business problem to be solved.
- b. Identification of the how the partner plans to apply EFM to address the problem identified above.
- c. What is the current technical environment that is in place today (e.g., mainframe supported by EDI, plus fax transmission to carriers)?
- d. Describe how the interchanges of operational data and documents takes place between partners today (i.e., what methods currently used will be replaced or supplemented by EFM applications).

4. Implementation Decisions

- a. What might potential adoption case study participants see as possible barriers to implementation?
- b. What would the case study participants identify as the critical issues involved in making the decision to go forward with implementation of EFM?
- c. What do potential case study participants see as possible benefits (e.g., competitive advantage, cost reduction, service enhancement, etc)?
- d. What performance measures might be implemented to support future implementation decisions of EFM?

5. Operation of Case Study Pilot – Participants will work with the US DOT to establish a pilot with a supply chain owner and at least three of their supply chain partners. The purpose of the pilot will be to determine the cost and benefits associated with implementation of EFM architecture and associated services.

Potential participants will present how they would administer the following:

- a. Identification of a plan to capture all startup, operational, and maintenance costs of operating an EFM pilot.
- b. Identification of a plan to capture both direct and indirect quantitative and qualitative benefits associated with the operation of the EFM pilot during the case study.
- c. Development of a plan on how economic returns may be calculated such as return on investment (ROI) or internal rate of return (IRR).
- d. Identification of the period of time of the pilot and the intention to continue to operate EFM after the case study is completed.

Notes:

- Length of Response: All responses to this RFI should be limited to no more than 10 pages.
- Due Dates: All responses are due 30 days from the date of posting of this RFI